

In the Claims:

Please cancel and add the following claims as indicated:

Claims 1-44: (canceled)

Claim 45 (new): A bait holding apparatus including:

a deformable receptacle into which the bait can be placed such that the receptacle can deform around the bait; and

a plurality of apertures defined in the receptacle such that, when the bait is placed therein, the predator can sense the bait via the apertures.

Claim 46 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 45 wherein the receptacle is a sleeve into which the bait can be inserted.

Claim 47 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 46 wherein the sleeve is elongate, being closed at one end and having a reinforced opening at the opposite end through which the bait can be introduced into the sleeve.

Claim 48 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 46 wherein the apertures are a plurality of holes formed in the sleeve to define a perforated or grid-like formation around the bait in use.

Claim 49 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 47 wherein the sleeve closed end is adapted to provide a line attachment point thereto and optionally has an aerodynamic profile to enhance movement of the apparatus through a fluid such as water.

Claim 50 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 45 wherein the receptacle is a plurality of deformable rings in series, with each ring connected to a next adjacent ring by one or more connecting members.

Claim 51 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 50 wherein the bait is inserted to extend through each of the rings in series, with two connecting members maintaining the rings in spaced relation to each other.

Claim 52 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 45 wherein the receptacle is formed from an elastomeric material having shape memory.

Claim 53 (new): A method for forming a bait holding apparatus including a deformable receptacle into which the bait can be placed such that the receptacle can deform around the bait and a plurality of apertures defined in the receptacle such that, when the bait is placed therein, the predator can sense the bait via the apertures, wherein the receptacle is a sleeve into which the bait can be inserted including the steps of:

- dipping a mandrel into molten material for the sleeve;
- removing the mandrel and allowing the sleeve to solidify around the mandrel;
- forming a plurality of apertures in the sleeve, either whilst on the mandrel, or once removed therefrom.

Claim 54 (new): A method as claimed in claim 53 wherein the apertures are formed in the sleeve by pressing, punching or cutting.

Claim 55 (new): A method for forming a bait holding apparatus including a deformable receptacle into which the bait can be placed such that the receptacle can deform around the bait and a plurality of apertures defined in the receptacle such that, when the bait is placed therein, the predator can sense the bait via the apertures, wherein the receptacle is a plurality of deformable rings in series, with each ring connected to a next adjacent ring by one or more connecting members including the steps of:

- arranging a sheet of deformable material on a substrate;
- forming in and then removing from the sheet a plurality of adjacent but non-overlapping rings, and such that at least one connecting member extends between adjacent rings.

Claim 56 (new): A method as claimed in claim 55 wherein the rings and connecting member(s) are formed by pressing, punching or cutting the sheet.

Claim 57 (new): A method as claimed in claim 55 wherein two connecting members are defined to extend between adjacent rings, one being tangential to an upper part of each ring and the other being tangential to a lower part of each ring.

Claim 58 (new): A bait holding apparatus formed from a material having a plurality of apertures therethrough that has a shape that enables it to be positioned to surround the bait in a close-facing relationship, in a manner that tends to preserve the structural integrity of the bait.

Claim 59 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 58 wherein the material is a deformable receptacle into which the bait can be placed such that the receptacle can deform around the bait and the receptacle includes a plurality of apertures such that, when the bait is placed therein, the predator can sense the bait via the apertures.

Claim 60 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 58 wherein the material is a metallic mesh receptacle such as a perforated or apertured stainless steel mesh.

Claim 61 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 58 wherein the material is one or more ties or tapes having apertures therethrough and which can be wrapped around the bait in the close-facing relationship.

Claim 62 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 61 wherein the ties or tapes are arranged in a grid formation for wrapping around the bait, the grid defining the apertures therethrough, with free ends of the ties or tapes being fastenable together to define the receptacle.

Claim 63 (new): A bait holding apparatus including:

 a receptacle in which the bait can be held and including an opening through which the bait can be introduced into the receptacle; and

 a closure for the receptacle opening and about which the receptacle can be releasably attached to close the opening.

Claim 64 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 63 wherein the closure has one or more passages extending therethrough such that fluid can flow from the apparatus exterior and into the receptacle interior.

Claim 65 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 63 wherein the closure is a bung having a peripheral recess defined at one end thereof into which a skirt portion of the receptacle opening can be releasably fastened.

Claim 66 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 65 wherein the skirt portion is retained in the recess by a tie or ring extending circumferentially therearound.

Claim 67 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 63 including an attractor device associated with the closure.

Claim 68 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 67 wherein the attractor device includes filaments attached to the closure, coloring of the closure, reflective material at or dispersed through the closure, or shaping of the closure.

Claim 69 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 63 wherein the receptacle includes a plurality of apertures.

Claim 70 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 63 wherein the receptacle is a sleeve into which the bait can be inserted, the sleeve being elongate, being closed at one end and having a reinforced opening at the opposite end through which the bait can be introduced into the sleeve.

Claim 71 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 70 wherein the apertures are a plurality of holes formed in the sleeve to define a perforated or grid-like formation around the bait in use.

Claim 72 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 70 wherein the sleeve closed end is adapted to provide a line attachment point thereto and optionally has an aerodynamic profile to enhance movement of the apparatus through a fluid such as water.

Claim 73 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 63 wherein the receptacle is a plurality of deformable rings in series, with each ring connected to a next adjacent ring by one or more connecting members.

Claim 74 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 73 wherein the bait is inserted to extend through each of the rings in series, with two connecting members maintaining the rings in spaced relation to each other.

Claim 75 (new): A bait holding apparatus including:

a receptacle in which the bait can be held and including an opening through which the bait can be introduced into the receptacle; and

a closure for the receptacle opening and having one or more passages extending therethrough such that fluid can flow from the apparatus exterior and into the receptacle interior.

Claim 76 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the receptacle includes a plurality of apertures.

Claim 77 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the receptacle is a sleeve into which the bait can be inserted, the sleeve being elongate, being closed at one end and having a reinforced opening at the opposite end through which the bait can be introduced into the sleeve.

Claim 78 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the apertures are a plurality of holes formed in the sleeve to define a perforated or grid-like formation around the bait in use.

Claim 79 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the sleeve closed end is adapted to provide a line attachment point thereto and optionally has an aerodynamic profile to enhance movement of the apparatus through a fluid such as water.

Claim 80 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the receptacle is a plurality of deformable rings in series, with each ring connected to a next adjacent ring by one or more connecting members.

Claim 81 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 80 wherein the bait is inserted to extend through each of the rings in series, with two connecting members maintaining the rings in spaced relation to each other.

Claim 82 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the closure has one or more passages extending therethrough such that fluid can flow from the apparatus exterior and into the receptacle interior.

Claim 83 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 wherein the closure is a bung having a peripheral recess defined at one end thereof into which a skirt portion of the receptacle opening can be releasably fastened.

Claim 84 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 83 wherein the skirt portion is retained in the recess by a tie or ring extending circumferentially therearound.

Claim 85 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 75 including an attractor device associated with the closure.

Claim 86 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 85 wherein the attractor device includes filaments attached to the closure, coloring of the closure, reflective material at or dispersed through the closure, or shaping of the closure.

Claim 87 (new): A bait holding apparatus including a plurality of ties, each tie connected to one or two adjacent ties and each having a fastening mechanism associated with opposite ends thereof such that each tie can be wrapped around the bait and fastened at or near its ends.

Claim 88 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 87 wherein each tie is connected to one or two adjacent ties by one or more transversally extending ties to define a tie grid.

Claim 89 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 88 wherein each transversally extending tie is insertable through a respective slot in each of the plurality of ties.

Claim 90 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 89 wherein each transversally extending tie is interferingly receivable in its respective slot in each of the plurality of ties.

Claim 91 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 87 wherein the fastening mechanism is:
free tie ends that can be tied together to fasten the apparatus to the bait; or
slotted head at one tie end and a free end at the other tie end that is receivable interferingly through the slot of its head to fasten the apparatus to the bait.

Claim 92 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 89 wherein sides of the other tie free end, or of each transversally extending tie, are serrated.

Claim 93 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 87 wherein each tie is a flat tape-like member, or is generally circular in cross-section.

Claim 94 (new): Apparatus as claimed in claim 87 wherein each tie is formed from an elastomeric material.

Claim 95 (new): An applicator for a bait holding apparatus that includes a receptacle into which the bait can be placed and a deformable opening to the receptacle, the applicator including a receptacle insertion end adapted for insertion into the opening of the receptacle to

deformably open the same to facilitate bait insertion, a bait guiding surface extending from the insertion end and over which the bait can be moved, with the bait guiding surface extending towards an applicator remote end for protruding beyond the receptacle when the applicator is inserted therein to facilitate applicator handling by a user.

Claim 96 (new): An applicable as claimed in claim 95 that is generally flat and, in plan view, that gradually tapers from a relatively wider remote end to a relatively narrower insertion end, with the bait guiding surface being defined on either side of the applicator.

Claim 97 (new): An applicator as claimed in claim 95 wherein one or more guide channels are provided on the bait guiding surface to facilitate guidance of the bait towards and in through the receptacle opening.

Claim 98 (new): An applicator as claimed in claim 95 wherein one or more finger holes are provided at the remote end to facilitate user handling of the applicator.

Claim 99 (new): An applicator as claimed in claim 95 that has a concave guiding surface, defining an elongate channel extending between the insertion and remote ends.